

EXHIBIT 1

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE
NASHVILLE DIVISION**

L.E., by his next friends and parents,
SHELLEY ESQUIVEL and MARIO
ESQUIVEL,

Plaintiff,

v.

BILL LEE, et al.,

Defendants.

Case No. 3:21-cv-00835

Chief Judge Waverly D. Crenshaw Jr.
Magistrate Judge Alistair E. Newbern

DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF L.E.

I, L.E., pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, declare as follows:

1. I make this declaration of my own personal knowledge and, if called as a witness, I could and would testify competently to the matters stated herein.

2. I am fifteen years old. I live in Knoxville, Tennessee with my parents, Mario and Shelley Esquivel, and my twin sister. I am currently a sophomore at Farragut High School in Knoxville.

3. I am a boy who is transgender. Ever since I can remember, I did not see myself as a girl. In fact, for most of my life, I have worn traditionally male clothing, and have engaged in activities that are viewed as stereotypically male, including cutting my hair short, becoming friends with boys before girls, and emulating my behavior after my father. Although my original birth certificate lists my sex assigned at birth as female, I fully identify as a male. I have always been a boy.

4. In 2019, when I was in seventh grade, I told my parents that I did not consider myself a girl and wanted to live as a boy. My parents were not surprised when I told them this because I had always expressed interest in traditionally male things. I emphasized to my parents that I had thought about this for a long time, and this was not just a phase: this is who I am.

5. In early 2020, shortly after I told my parents, I began seeing a pediatrician to discuss potential options for my transitioning into living fully as a boy. Over the coming months, I worked with a pediatrician, an endocrinologist, and a mental health care therapist assist with the process of transitioning.

6. On January 28, 2021, I was officially diagnosed with gender dysphoria by my mental healthcare therapist, Samuel Steinbrugge.

7. Prior to beginning my transition, I felt a disconnect between who I was on the inside and what I looked like on the outside. I did not feel comfortable identifying as a girl, and it frustrated me when people perceived me as a girl. It makes me feel embarrassed when people perceive me as a girl. I often felt anxious and did not feel at peace in my own body. In fact, I have on numerous occasions expressed to my parents and doctors that I do not want to develop breasts or otherwise undergo the typical stages of female puberty because that is not who I am.

8. To further assist with my transition, I began taking pubertal suppression medications on April 23, 2021. I am also planning to begin testosterone treatment later this fall to further the transition process.

9. Even before I was formally diagnosed with gender dysphoria, I began the process of socially transitioning and living my life as a boy. This gradual process has included cutting my hair to a more traditionally male style, legally changing my name, adopting male pronouns,

using the male restroom, and continuing to dress and groom in traditionally male ways. In all respects, I live my life as a boy because that is who I am.

10. My family, peers at school, and teachers recognize me as a boy. My family fully supports me living as a boy because they recognize that this is who I am. Ever since people began recognizing me as a boy, I have been much happier. My anxiety has diminished, and I feel much better that people are perceiving me for who I really am.

11. In addition to living authentically as the boy I am, I am happiest when I am playing golf. I began playing golf in the summer of 2018, when I went to a free golf clinic in Knoxville with my parents. I instantly fell in love with the game.

12. Shortly after that experience, that same summer, my parents bought me my own set of clubs and golf shoes, which they did because they realized how much it meant to me.

13. Unlike other sports, golf is the only sport that has kept my attention – largely because I love playing it. I always want to play more, and I am engaged in making sure I am taking steps to improve my game.

14. I love that playing golf requires skill, focus, and determination. When I am on the course, I feel like the world around me is quiet and I am able to simply focus on improving my game. I often have trouble focusing on things, but with golf it feels different. I love the challenge of having to focus on improving my game, and I feel really proud when I feel as though my years of coaching have paid off by allowing me to hit good shots.

15. Over the years, I have taken golf lessons with multiple instructors. From July 2018 to July 2021, I took these lessons as often as weekly. I have had several golf coaches—both male and female—and they have helped me improve my game. In fact, my chipping and distance hitting have gotten much better over the years.

16. I often play golf with my dad. Though recreational in nature, we have played a number of courses throughout the greater Knoxville area, and we try to go to the driving range a few times a month. This practice has paid off, and I am continuing to get better over time.

17. When I was in middle school, I played on the Farragut Middle School girls' golf team. I played on this team before I had begun the process of transitioning into living my life as a boy.

18. While members of the girls' golf team were never outwardly rude to me, I felt an overwhelming sense of discomfort playing on that team. Looking back on that experience, I get angry and embarrassed. I did not feel like myself when playing on the girls' team, and that experience significantly contributed to my feelings of anxiety. I am sad to think that my only option to play golf is to have to go through these anxieties and difficulties again.

19. It is my dream to be able to play for the Farragut High School boys' golf team, and I have expressed that to my parents. I want to play on this team because I love the sport of golf, but I also want to be able to be who I am when I play. Due to the recent legislation that was passed in Tennessee called SB 228, however, I will not be able to achieve this goal of mine simply because of who I am.

20. I was devastated when I learned about SB 228. I did not understand why politicians would want to target individuals like me, who simply want to play the sport they love and live their life authentically. I felt even worse after being able to see all my other friends be able to freely try out and join the teams of their choice.

21. I am much happier now living my life as a boy than I ever was when I had to live my life as a girl. I cannot fathom having to live my life as a girl in order to play golf. In fact, if

that is my only option to play for my school, I would choose not to play golf for my school. My identity is not negotiable: this is who I am, and I must live my life as a boy.

22. If I had to play on the Farragut High School girls' golf team, I would be the only boy on the team. I expect I would be ridiculed as a result. The idea of doing this significantly raises my anxiety levels, and I could not endure this experience.

23. Playing for the Farragut High School boys' golf team, on the other hand, would allow me to experience the benefits of team sports and contribute to something greater than myself. I want to be able to experience the camaraderie of being part of a team. I want to push myself to be a better golfer, and I know that playing with and learning from the other boys on the Farragut High School boys' golf team would allow me to do that.

24. The fact that I'm not allowed to play on the Farragut High School boys' golf team, just because I'm transgender, makes me feel very angry and devastated. I cannot change who I am, and the fact that this law prevents me from playing golf on the boys' team makes me feel like I am an outcast. Even though I work extremely hard to improve my golf game, I feel like I am facing an uphill battle and making no progress. This law makes me feel not worthy, and certainly makes me feel more anxious and concerned about the future. Playing sports on the boys' golf team would mean the world to me. But knowing that no matter how hard I try to make the team, with this law in place there is nothing I can do to make the team, regardless of how well I play, makes me feel completely defeated.

25. Playing golf makes me really happy. I hope to be able to play on the Farragut High School boys' golf team and beyond in college or in some other capacity. Playing for the Farragut High School boys' golf team would increase my ability to potentially play golf at the

collegiate level. But more importantly, playing for the Farragut High School boys' golf team would allow me to play the game I love while being my authentic self.

* * *

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on 10/6/22

L.E.

L.E.